



House Committee on Health Policy

Cora B. Anderson House Office Building, Room 519

124 North Capitol Avenue

Lansing, MI 48933

To the Honorable Chair Rogers, Vice-Chair VanderWall, Vice-Chair Whitsett, and esteemed Committee Members,

My name is Valerie Rinck, and I am the advocacy coordinator National Kidney Foundation. It is a great honor to support the voice of our kidney health advocates each day and to champion legislation that would benefit their lives.

Organ donation is the optimum treatment for patients with end stage renal disease (ESRD) also known as kidney failure, but the supply of transplantable kidneys does not meet the growing demand and the reality is, not everyone on the transplant list will get a life saving kidney. A way to combat this shortage is through living organ donation.

To date, Michigan is home to 6,878 living kidney donors, who gave the gift of life to someone in need. Unfortunately, prospective donors may face financial barriers to donation through unexpected expenditures like loss wages, childcare costs, lodging, and meal costs not covered by insurance. By providing a tax credit, prospective living donors will now have to face one less financial barrier to donation.

Here are some key facts on the state of kidney disease in our country:

- Seventeen to 20 people each day die on the wait list because they can't get a lifesaving transplant.
- 1 in 7 or 37 million Americans have kidney disease – and 90% don't even know it.
- Living organ donors go on to live long healthy, active lives.

- Transplantation is a cost-effective treatment for patients with kidney disease leading to better outcomes.
- Living donors can shorten someone's time on the waitlist.
- Transplantation has a significantly lower cost to Medicare and Medicaid than keeping a patient on dialysis.
- There is no actuarial risk associated with living organ donation.
- Michigan is one of six states with no protections or deductions for living organ donors.

Today the National Kidney Foundation, our Voices for Kidney Health Advocates, and the kidney community ask you to support HB 4361 to support living organ donors of the future. I thank the committee for their time and consideration on this legislation.

Sincerely,

Valerie Rinck

Advocacy Coordinator

The National Kidney Foundation